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Wednesday, 28 October 1998, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Opertti ..... (Uruguay)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 28 *(continued)*

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/53/458)

Draft resolution (A/53/L.12)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/53/L.12.

Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I have the pleasure of announcing that, since the draft was introduced, the following countries have joined the list of its co-sponsors: Belarus, Côte d'Ivoire, Israel, Mali, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Suriname and Uganda.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/53/L.12.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/53/L.12?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 53/13).

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In closing our debate on the item under consideration, the presidency would like to comment on an element that it deems vital to the strengthening of the ties that link the parliaments of the States Members of the Organization, the organization of those parliaments — the Inter-Parliamentary Union — and the United Nations system itself.

Clearly, the ideals of cooperation and dialogue that led to the creation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union over 100 years ago are today more important than ever. As a number of delegations have stressed, the parliaments of the world — composed of men and women elected by the people — represent a source and a focal point for the necessary support that the United Nations ideals of peace, democracy and development must receive from all of its Members.

The conference of speakers of national parliaments proposed for the year 2000, to be held in conjunction with the Millennium Assembly at the United Nations, will no doubt be an ideal and very welcome opportunity further to strengthen this cooperation, which has been fuelled and will continue to be fuelled by timely actions and resolutions such as the one we have adopted today, with the support of all States present.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 28?

It was so decided.

98-86224 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Agenda item 50

Report of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the third annual report of the International Criminal Tribunal (A/53/429)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the third annual report of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on Mr. Laity Kama, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Mr. Kama, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (*interpretation from French*): I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before the Assembly once again to report on the activities of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda during the past year. The third annual report, which I have the honour to submit to the Assembly, details the Tribunal's activities since July 1997. It is the last report of the judges' first term of office, which expires at the end of May 1999.

In my statement this afternoon, I will refrain from discussing at length the written report before the Assembly. I would particularly like, however — after a brief description of the Tribunal's main judicial activities — to draw the Assembly's attention to certain especially important matters directly related to the Tribunal's functioning. These matters pertain to the places of imprisonment of convicted persons and to security.

The Tribunal was formally established by the Security Council on 8 November 1994. It is charged with prosecuting persons presumed responsible for acts of genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of Rwanda in 1994, in order to put an end to impunity and to promote national reconciliation.

In fulfilling the mandate entrusted to them, the judges have consistently endeavoured to render fair and expeditious justice, in accordance with article 19 of the Statute of the Tribunal. However, over and above the well-known administrative difficulties it had to face at the outset, the Tribunal has also been confronted with logistical problems in organizing trials, such as having only one courtroom for the two Trial Chambers and the imperative need to ensure the protection of witnesses at all stages of trial proceedings. All this somewhat slowed the work of the Tribunal during the first two years of its existence. In that context, 1998 most certainly marks a very positive change and, I believe, the beginning of a new era for the Tribunal.

Since the submission of the Tribunal's second annual report, judicial activities have increased considerably. The much awaited first judgement of the Tribunal was delivered on 2 September 1998. It concerns the case of *The Prosecutor v. Jean-Paul Akayesu*. It was closely followed on 4 September by the judgement and sentencing of Jean Kambanda, who was Prime Minister of the Interim Government of Rwanda in 1994.

Regarding the judgement delivered on 2 September, the Trial Chamber found Akayesu guilty on 9 counts out of 15, including genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide and crimes against humanity. Commentators lauded this judgement as crucial for the development of international criminal justice, not only because it was the first judgement handed down by the Tribunal for Rwanda, but also because it was the very first delivered by an international court in regard to the crime of genocide. In this judgement — a voluminous document of nearly 300 pages, delivered simultaneously in the two working languages of the Tribunal — the Trial Chamber ruled on certain matters of law that had never before been brought before an international court. It thus reviewed the law applicable to each of the crimes falling within its jurisdiction — that is, the crimes of genocide, complicity in genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide, and violations of article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II thereto. In so doing, the Chamber defined some of the constituent crimes of the offences falling within its jurisdiction, particularly rape, since there was no commonly accepted definition of this term in international law.

The Akayesu judgement brought to a close a trial that had lasted more than a year. During the trial, the Trial Chamber heard 42 witnesses called by the parties —

testimony which generated more than 4,000 pages of transcripts. The Chamber also considered 125 exhibits entered in evidence. After holding a pre-sentencing hearing in the Jean-Paul Akayesu case, on 2 October the Trial Chamber sentenced him to life imprisonment.

The other major event was the sentencing, on 4 September 1998, in the case *The Prosecutor v. Jean Kambanda*. The Trial Chamber, which had previously found the former Prime Minister of Rwanda guilty, sentenced him to life imprisonment, after verifying the conditions under which he had pleaded guilty. A number of commentators also viewed this judgement as historic, on the one hand because of the position of authority held by the accused, and on the other hand because a plea of guilty by a person accused of genocide before an international criminal court was without precedent.

It should be underscored, however, that the guilty verdict and sentence against Akayesu and the life sentence imposed on Kambanda are not final since the convicted have lodged appeals. It is therefore up to the Appeals Chamber to make the final judgement.

In addition to the above, two other trials are under way. One case, *The Prosecutor v. Clément Kayishema and Obed Ruzindana*, will soon enter the deliberations phase, the Trial Chamber having started last week to hear the closing arguments of the Prosecutor, which will be followed by those of the defence. The other case, *The Prosecutor v. Georges Rutaganda*, has been delayed due to the health problems of the accused and of his counsel. As a result, the Trial Chamber concerned has had to adjourn the proceedings several times. Hearings will resume as soon as possible.

Despite these tangible achievements, the judges are aware that much remains to be done, if only because, for instance, 31 accused persons have been arrested by various States and handed over to the Tribunal to be held in custody at its detention facility in Arusha. To this number should be added another accused who was recently arrested in Namibia and has since been transferred to Arusha. Clearly, those still awaiting trial should be tried as soon as possible in order to comply with their fundamental right to be tried within a reasonable amount of time.

In this regard, the judges wish to express their satisfaction with the efforts made by the Prosecutor to arrest accused or suspected persons. Indeed, principally under the aegis of the new Deputy Prosecutor, several arrests were made, notably in the course of an operation carried out in cooperation with the Kenyan authorities in July 1997. I reported to the Assembly on this last year. This operation resulted in the arrest of persons considered to have held positions of authority in Rwanda in 1994, including an ex-minister who is the first woman to be indicted by an international criminal court. In June of this year, another operation in various West African countries resulted in the arrest and transfer to the Tribunal of six more persons.

I would like to welcome the cooperation extended by various countries involved in the two operations — Kenya, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Togo. More generally, we should like to thank all those countries that have supported us in our efforts to secure justice by giving a positive response to our requests for cooperation and assistance, whether by the judges or the Prosecutor.

However, the presence of all these detainees at the Tribunal's detention facility and the need to try them as soon as possible have made the organization of the judicial calendar all the more difficult. Another consequence of the increase in arrested indictees and the significant increase in the number of motions resulting from this increase was that the Tribunal soon found itself overloaded, and the two Trial Chambers were not sufficient to handle all the cases involved. Hence, the Security Council — at our request and after noting the progress achieved by the Tribunal — decided, by its resolution 1165 (1998) of 30 April 1998, to establish a third Trial Chamber. Thus the Council took due account of the difficulties faced by the judges in the fulfilment of their mandate, which had been rendered more complicated, as I have said, by the combined effect of a steadily increasing number of detainees and the imperative to respect certain standards and principles governing the administration of justice. In its resolution, the Security Council urged the organs of the Tribunal to continue their efforts to increase further the efficiency of the Tribunal's work and to consider how to enhance their work procedures in order to speed up the proceedings.

First, on improving in the way the Tribunal functions, it falls to the Registrar to rationalize administrative procedures in the pursuit of greater efficiency. Although the judges are satisfied that considerable efforts have been made to improve the administrative and logistical support given to the Trial Chambers and the Prosecutor, it must be said that several problems do remain, to which solutions must be found as rapidly as possible. Among the most urgent is the need

to computerize the judicial archives, thus greatly facilitating their use, and the need to increase the number of legal advisers assisting the Chambers. In this connection, we hope that the provisions contained in the draft budget before you pertaining to the creation of several posts for legal officers at various levels will be approved. Moreover, it is essential that the third courtroom be finished as soon as possible so that the new judges can begin hearings as soon as they arrive in Arusha.

With regard to procedural reforms intended to accelerate proceedings, the judges amended certain provisions of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence at the fifth plenary session of the Tribunal for Rwanda, held in Arusha from 1 to 5 June 1998. Among the numerous amendments adopted, special mention could be made of those relating to the modalities of pre-trial preparation, which should help speed up disclosure procedures between the parties as to the number and order of appearance of witnesses for the prosecution and the defence. The judges also sanctioned a procedure well known in civil law whereby the Trial Chamber pronounces both judgement as to guilt and the sentence at the same time, if need be, instead of in two different stages, as had been the case up to now.

The Prosecutor had considered that another way of expediting proceedings would be to join several cases. Initially, however, instead of filing motions for joinder, as she had appeared resolved to do, the Prosecutor preferred to present a new indictment citing 29 persons, some of whom had already been indicted and had made their initial appearances, and for some of whom the trial date had even been set. The judge to whom the indictment was submitted rejected it because of flawed procedure, and the prosecution's subsequent appeal was declared inadmissible by the Appeals Chamber. Thereupon, the Prosecutor finally chose to file, in due form, several motions for joinder that the Trial Chambers were prepared to hear. But the defence then objected to the composition of the Chambers set up for that purpose and appealed the decision taken to maintain it as it was. And so, consideration of the motions for joinder is suspended until the Appeals Chamber decision is known.

On this issue, I would stress that in spite of the fact that certain motions were not dealt with as diligently as the judges of the Trial Chambers would have liked, the latter to date have handed down more than 150 decisions in regard to indictment procedures and witness protection measures or preliminary motions. This testifies to the efforts made by the judges, with the assistance of the legal officers of the Chambers and the support of the judicial Registry in general.

That having been said, I should like now to broach the two crucial questions that I referred to earlier — namely, the place of imprisonment and the security of the Tribunal and all who work there, including the judges.

The reason I wish to discuss with you the problem of the place of imprisonment is because two persons have already been sentenced by the Tribunal to terms of imprisonment, and if the Appeals Chamber upholds the sentences, the problem of knowing in which country the terms will be served is acute. Article 26 of the Statute states:

> "Imprisonment shall be served in Rwanda or any of the States on a list of States which have indicated to the Security Council their willingness to accept convicted persons, as designated by the International Tribunal for Rwanda. Such imprisonment shall be in accordance with the applicable law of the State concerned, subject to the supervision of the International Tribunal for Rwanda."

This means that the Tribunal needs the cooperation of States, which is all the more urgent in this area because, as I told you last year when I presented the second annual report, to date only six States, as well as Rwanda, have informed the Security Council of their intention to receive, sometimes under certain conditions, convicted persons in their national prisons. Those States are: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. I wish to thank those States most particularly and to say how honoured we are by their support.

Despite our efforts, those of the United Nations Secretary-General and of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, so far no African country has declared its readiness to receive the persons convicted by the Tribunal. Now, you will understand that for various reasons, pertaining as much to cultural factors as to their families' proximity, it might be desirable that certain convicted persons at least serve their sentences in African prisons.

We believe that the reticence of many African States is due to the financial difficulties involved, as the convicted persons must serve their sentences in facilities meeting international standards. Hence, I am appealing to

you to transmit to the Governments you represent our request for cooperation, in order that they might consider receiving convicted persons in their prisons and that consideration be given to the possibilities of cooperation in the financing of such operations.

The other particularly pressing problem on which I wish to comment is that of security. Security means first of all the security of witnesses who agree to testify before us in Arusha, often at risk of their lives. In this connection, it is necessary that witness protection services be strengthened and, above all, that they have at their disposal the best guarantees of security. The pertinence of the question as to what guarantee of security can be given in Arusha is greater than ever. We are not questioning the support given by Tanzania, which hosts the Tribunal and does its utmost to ensure the best possible working conditions. In this regard, I have already had the opportunity to express our gratitude personally to the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Benjamin Mkapa, who has always assured us of his support.

However, the two sentences handed down recently give new acuity to the urgent security issue. The judges and the Registrar are in contact with the host country authorities to try to strengthen security at the Tribunal in view of the new situation.

With these few words, I have desired to draw your attention to the substantial progress achieved by the Tribunal, but also to some of the difficulties encountered, including security, which I feel are sufficiently serious for appropriate solutions to be found as rapidly as possible.

In concluding, allow me, on behalf of the six Trial Chamber judges, to express to you our sincere gratitude for the honour of having been elected in May 1995 to our positions as judges of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. As we approach the end of our term of office, on behalf of us all, Honourable Judges Lennart Aspegren of Sweden, Tafazzal Hossein Khan of Bangladesh, Yacov Ostrovsky of the Russian Federation, Navanethem Pillay of South Africa, William Hussein Sekule of Tanzania and myself, I must tell you that the mission you assigned to us was a challenge every day of the four years of our term of office. Fully aware of the importance of this mission, we have endeavoured to establish a concept of international criminal justice that meets the expectations of the victims of the severest of crimes — genocide and crimes against humanity — while also satisfying the requirement for scrupulous respect for equitable justice.

We know that the accomplishment to which we have contributed is far from perfect. The concept of international criminal justice which has been given expression in Arusha and in The Hague, opening the way for the Rome Conference, is the work of pioneers. As such, it is essential that it receive the political support it needs in order to flourish.

History will probably remember the twentieth century not only because it saw the most barbaric acts, but also because it witnessed the affirmation of the fundamental principles of human rights and of international humanitarian law. Through our combined efforts, the twenty-first century could well be that of the effective implementation of these principles through the systematic penal repression of any violations thereof.

Mr. Mtango (United Republic of Tanzania): Please allow me at the outset to acknowledge with great appreciation the excellent introduction of the third report of the Tribunal for Rwanda that Judge Laïty Kama, the President of the Tribunal, has just made to this Assembly.

As the country privileged to host the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, my delegation welcomes with particular pleasure the third annual report of the Tribunal for Rwanda, contained in document A/53/429. We are especially delighted to note that many of the serious difficulties which earlier worked to constrain the effectiveness and efficiency of the Tribunal are increasingly being eliminated.

It is not possible to commend all those who, in one way or another, have made positive contributions to the fulfilment of the mandate of the Tribunal. These include Governments, international organizations, civil society and individuals. Special mention, however, needs to be made of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, whose personal interest in the success of the Tribunal has been critical; the President and the judges of the Tribunal; the Prosecutor; the Registrar; and their staff, whose unity of purpose and commitment to the task at hand have truly made a difference.

The current report is also a source of special encouragement, containing as it does the report on the first judgement ever handed down by an international tribunal on the crime of genocide. We are also impressed by the fact that, since the report was issued, there has been yet a second judgement in that regard.

These judgements by the Tribunal are undoubtedly of historical significance. They are a pivotal landmark in the history of international criminal law, as they underscore our common resolve to ensure that genocide and crimes against humanity will not go unpunished. The reach of their significance is also of particular importance to the people, not only of Rwanda, but of the Great Lakes region as a whole and, indeed, elsewhere where conflicts have horrifically eroded the value placed on human life.

It is in this regard that we must commend the prosecutions, which, in our view, were not only fair to the defendants, but also called for vigorous sentences clearly meant to put an end to impunity and thereby to promote national reconciliation and the restoration of peace in Rwanda. Indeed, we owe it to the people of Rwanda not to fail in the delivery of justice as we failed in preventing the genocide and carnage which took place in 1994.

Since it is clear that the workload of the Tribunal has been heavy, it is appropriate that we should welcome the decision to establish a third Trial Chamber. We believe that this will lighten the existing burden and expedite the process. Indeed, the increasing number of detainees whom the Tribunal is now holding is welcome proof of the growing support of Governments, which have responded to the Tribunal's request for the surrender of suspects. As we welcome this development and commend those who have facilitated such cooperation with the Tribunal, we must continue to appeal for increased support in surrendering to the Tribunal the suspects it seeks.

My delegation is under no illusion about the challenges facing the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The report on agenda item 50 correctly notes that there remain some difficulties requiring solution. Even with widespread moral support for the Tribunal, much will depend on the practical assistance we, as members of the international community, extend to the court.

The basic outlines are clear. The Chambers remain without sufficient technical resources, despite their heavy workload. The Office of the Prosecutor continues to require the cooperation of the international community, while the Registry also continues to face resource constraints undermining its ability to optimize its administrative service to the Chambers and the Procuracy. These need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

As the Tribunal continues to face these challenges, which require the support of this Organization and, indeed, of the international community, we note with encouragement that the new Registrar has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the Tribunal's operations and that the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the United Nations was able to conclude in its follow-up report that substantial improvements have taken place in almost all sectors of the Tribunal's operations.

Admittedly, the Tribunal in Arusha has been working in challenging circumstances, some of which we have just heard about from its President. It has, however, made commendable progress. Regrettably, what has attracted more attention — particularly of the media — has been the difficulties it has had to confront, rather than what it has achieved. It is our hope that the recent successes will be a turning point in this regard. The Government of Tanzania remains strongly committed in its support of the Tribunal and we shall continue, in partnership with its leadership, to strive to ensure that all the necessary facilities conducive to its smooth functioning are placed at its disposal. My Government reiterates its pledge to cooperate and stands willing to discuss and resolve any difficulties facing the Tribunal.

We were gratified by the visit paid to the Tribunal by the Secretary-General earlier this year. In welcoming him to our country, we reiterated our firm belief that, just as we have to play our part, the international community must also lend its support to the Tribunal in order to enable it to discharge its mandate and assist, as it should, in the healing process in Rwanda. We continue to make the same appeal to this Assembly.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that in spite of the recent proud achievements of the Tribunal, further progress may be slowed unless we all demonstrate our firm support by availing the court of the resources it needs, transmitting to it the information it seeks and delivering the people it indicts. Above all, this challenge is ours. We must resolve not to let the court down.

Mr. Ka (Senegal) (*interpretation from French*): Judge Laïty Kama, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, presented to us with great competence and analytical clarity the third annual report of the Tribunal charged with the task of trying persons accused of genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of Rwanda or in the territory of neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994.

The mandate of the Tribunal, the scope of which makes it an agenda in itself, seems at first sight to consist of a series of challenges that are difficult to tackle.

In 1994 the international community, badly shaken by the atrocities and horrors of the tragedy in Rwanda, expressed global censure, a sense of distress and the will to do everything possible in the future to prevent such reprehensible and barbaric acts and to put an end to the reign of impunity. The members of the Tribunal for Rwanda, like their colleagues from the Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, can be considered true pioneers in the complex, delicate and sensitive field of respect for law and human dignity and the exercise of justice and equity in the context of international law.

The report under consideration today bears witness to the fact that, despite working conditions that are often difficult, the members of the Tribunal for Rwanda have been able, with courage and devotion, to apply international justice effectively and credibly.

Since its establishment, the Tribunal has confirmed indictments against 43 people, 31 of whom were apprehended and held in a detention facility in Arusha. The guilty plea of one of the most renowned of the detainees, Mr. Jean Kambanda, transitional Prime Minister during the time of the Rwandan tragedy, enabled the Tribunal and the international community to achieve a major breakthrough in the establishment of a reliable international judicial system that rejects the inevitability of impunity for acts of genocide or other serious violations of human rights.

That admission of guilt, as well as the trial that followed, have assumed historic significance, because they conferred upon the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda a very enviable position as the first international legal body to deal specifically with matters relating to the crime of genocide.

Mr. Mra (Myanmar), Vice-President, took the Chair.

That achievement was made possible by international cooperation and, in particular, by the unswerving commitment and exemplary support of the African countries in the genuinely difficult but inspiring discharge of the mandate entrusted to the Tribunal.

The Security Council and the Secretariat of the United Nations have each made a significant contribution to the attainment of that objective. It is hardly necessary to repeat that the judges of the Tribunal, working in often difficult conditions, have, with great courage, determination and dedication, accomplished a truly impressive task that has been hailed by the entire international community.

As we are about to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in a year that has witnessed the creation of the International Criminal Court, we must all recognize that the Tribunal for Rwanda has carried out useful jurisprudential work that, above all, will make it possible to put an end to the culture of impunity.

Despite these encouraging achievements, we must bear in mind that the impressive work of the Tribunal is far from finished. Many challenges remain, and the international community must work together with the Tribunal to meet them.

My country believes that the excellent work that has been accomplished deserves to be continued and supported. The international community is therefore called upon to act. More than ever, it must continue to support and effectively contribute to the operation of the Tribunal and the noble mission of the judges, who are successfully, skilfully and very courageously discharging their mandate.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Norway welcomes the first ever judgements on the crime of genocide by an international court, 50 years after the adoption of the genocide Convention. It fell to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to deliver those ground-breaking decisions in September this year. Those precedent-setting cases provide the legal confirmation that genocide actually occurred in Rwanda in 1994, and they shed extensive light on the chain of events linked thereto. Moreover, they represent important new building blocks in international jurisprudence with regard to the prosecution of the most serious international crimes. The experience obtained by the Rwanda Tribunal is also a stepping stone towards the establishment of the International Criminal Court, in accordance with the Rome Statute adopted in July this year. After a difficult start, the Rwanda Tribunal is now up and running and we, like so many others, hope that its activity will contribute to the long-term process of national reconciliation in Rwanda.

We have previously expressed concern about the administrative difficulties with which the Tribunal has been confronted, and we have followed with great attention efforts to improve working conditions in Arusha

and Kigali. After a careful reading of the report before us, and on the basis of the study made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, we recognize that significant progress has been made. Even though improvements still need to be made, we feel encouraged by the steps that have already been taken and the results so far achieved.

Among the noteworthy improvements made, we note the measures taken this summer in order to speed up cases before the Tribunal. We are confident that these steps will contribute to an effective handling of cases without reducing in any way the procedural rights of the accused or of any other parties to the process.

Norway remains a strong supporter of the Tribunal and joins those that have appealed to States to take all legislative steps necessary in order to ensure effective State cooperation with the Tribunal. In addition to legislation and compliance with the Tribunal's requests for assistance, concrete support for the Tribunal should be shown through financial and material support. The Norwegian Government has, among its measures, declared its willingness to consider applications from the Tribunal concerning the enforcement of sentences from the Tribunal and, subsequently, in conformity with our national law, receive a limited number of convicted persons to serve their terms in Norway.

Mr. Zmeevski (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian)*: The Russian Federation is grateful to the President of the International Tribunal for Rwanda for the report on the work of that body of international criminal justice for 1997-1998.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to the work of the Rwanda Tribunal. It is our belief that the work of the Tribunal is a solid factor in the restoration and maintenance of peace and calm in Rwanda and the adjoining region. The Tribunal's judgements in the cases against Kambanda and Akayesu not only elicited a widespread political reaction, but were also an important factor in developing international criminal law. The Tribunal's decision finding Jean-Paul Akayesu guilty of genocide was the first international verdict on this crime in the history of the world.

Russia has supported the work of the United Nations to overcome the organizational, financial and staffing difficulties encountered by the International Tribunal for Rwanda. In the Security Council and in the General Assembly we clearly expressed our positive reaction to the proposals to enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Tribunal, *inter alia*, through establishing a third Trial Chamber.

A few days from now we will be electing to the Tribunal a new, larger group of judges, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1165 (1998), and they will be called upon immediately to start presiding over trials against a large number of accused who are now awaiting trial. We believe that with the establishment of the third Trial Chamber, the international community will be entitled to expect the Tribunal to work faster, thus evening the imbalance in the level of activity between the Rwanda and the Yugoslavia Tribunals. This approach will help avoid any impression of double standards in approaches to situations of flagrant and mass violations of international humanitarian law.

As can be seen from the report, during its four years of existence the Tribunal has handed down only two judgements. The trials of three indictees begun early last year are not yet completed, and the trials of some other indictees have not even started yet. At this stage there are indictments against more than 40 people, and about 30 people have actually been arrested and are being detained in Arusha awaiting trial — indeed, some have been awaiting trial for about three years. Trials have started for only five accused persons, and, as can be seen from the report, each trial tends to last about one and half to two years. If the Tribunal's pace of work continues unchanged, it is difficult to see how over the next 8 to 10 years it will be possible to complete the trials of the more than 30 indictees when the number of those being accused and indicted is constantly increasing.

The Security Council's decision to increase the number of judges and to create a third Trial Chamber does not mean that this situation will automatically improve. The new Trial Chamber will be able to start working only when another room for hearings has been built, so that the Prosecutor will be able to begin another trial in that Trial Chamber. It is difficult to see from the report of the Tribunal, unfortunately, what the situation is regarding the provision of conditions to ensure that the third Trial Chamber will be able to start functioning as soon as possible.

The Tribunal's report refers to the fact that during trials, for one reason or another, there are often breaks, or cases are adjourned, and the Trial Chambers are left idle. However, there are no specific comments in the report about what measures could be taken to avoid that situation or how to fill the gaps in the Court's schedule.

It would seem to us that the time could be used to begin and carry on other trials, but it is simply not clear from the report why the decisions taken by the judges in this matter have not been implemented.

There are a number of ways in which the effectiveness of the Tribunal's work could be improved. It seems to us that to ensure the effective work of the International Criminal Court, the procedures and working methods of its various structures must be improved and the shortage of administrative and technical staff must be redressed. The construction of the premises for the Tribunal have also to be arranged. We believe that if these measures are carried out, it will help the Tribunal quickly and fully to discharge the mandate entrusted to it.

Mr. Mangoaela (Lesotho): The world continues to witness unprecedented developments in the protection of the basic norms of humanitarian law and human rights. The ad hoc Tribunals have shown not only that an international criminal system is possible, but that it can be effective. By offering justice as an alternative to retribution, the Tribunals broke the cycle of violence and contributed to the process of reconciliation. Ultimately, the Tribunals will give way to a permanent court with authority to punish atrocities whenever, wherever and by whomever they are committed. The importance of these Tribunals as precedents for a permanent criminal court can thus not be underestimated. It is therefore essential that we ensure their success. More importantly, a historic step towards making the rule of law and the protection of human rights truly universal was taken as recently as July 1998, when the Rome Statute was adopted by an overwhelming majority of States participating in the Rome Conference. The adoption of the Statute has given renewed hope to the struggle for human rights and the fight against impunity.

Before commenting on the report before us, let me begin by thanking Judge Laïty Kama, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, for his clear and concise introduction of the third report of the Tribunal as contained in document A/53/429. We commend Judge Kama for his leadership of the Tribunal since 1994. We also commend all the other judges and the staff of the Rwanda Tribunal for their hard work.

Overall, the report highlights a number of significant developments that have taken place since the last report. We are happy to note that the Tribunal has safely navigated the rough shores and is now well on its way into the calm waters of the high seas. As the report indicates, 43 individuals have been formally indicted, 31 of whom have been apprehended and are awaiting trial. We urge States to cooperate with the Tribunal in apprehending the remaining suspects wherever they may be. It is particularly noteworthy that the Tribunal has handed down its first judgement and has recorded its first guilty plea. These developments demonstrate the hard work and dedication of the Tribunal's workforce. The guilty plea by former Prime Minister Jean Kambanda, the most senior official of the Interim Government during the height of the atrocities of 1994, vindicates the international community's long-held conviction not only that genocide was committed in Rwanda, but that it was planned at the highest level. The guilty plea sends a clear message to all those who participated in the mass murder of innocent people in Rwanda that their days are numbered.

We welcome the various measures taken to improve the administration and logistical support provided to the Chambers and the Prosecutor in the discharge of their functions. Among the improvements undertaken since the last report are extensions to the library, the upgrading of the satellite communications system, the building of the second courtroom and the systematic implementation of the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, all of which are welcome developments which will further enhance the Tribunal's work.

We are all too familiar with the phrase "justice delayed is justice denied". Any unjustified delays in administering justice will have a negative impact on people's perception of the Tribunal. It is for this reason that we welcome the creation of the third Trial Chamber, which we trust will enable the Tribunal to carry out its functions more effectively and ensure that justice is speedily rendered to the victims and the survivors of the Rwanda tragedy. While we note that most delays are attributable to factors relating to the normal administration of criminal justice, we urge the Tribunal to continue with its innovative measures aimed at expediting proceedings.

The vitality of the Tribunal depends upon the cooperation of States in apprehending and transferring suspects, in permitting on-site visits and interviews with witnesses, and in securing documents. We commend all countries that have accorded full cooperation and assistance to the Tribunal. As the Nairobi-Kigali operation has clearly demonstrated, cooperation with and assistance to the Tribunal can bear fruitful results in bringing to justice those involved in genocide in Rwanda. In particular, we commend the valuable assistance

extended to the Tribunal by the Governments of Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Kenya, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, the Central African Republic, Belgium, Cameroon and the Netherlands. The international community also bears the responsibility of sharing the burden of enforcing the Tribunal's sentences by accepting prisoners. We trust that more States will shortly express a willingness to accept convicted prisoners.

Finally, since inadequacy of resources cause delays in the Tribunal's administration of justice, we express our hope that the Tribunal will continue to receive stable and adequate financial, human and technical resources to ensure its effective functioning.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia — the associated country Cyprus, and the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area the Principality of Liechtenstein align themselves with this statement.

The European Union wishes first of all to thank the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Judge Laïty Kama, for his introduction of the annual report of the Tribunal covering the period 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998. We congratulate the President, the Prosecutor and the Registrar of the Court for their work over the past year. The European Union conveys its appreciation also to the host countries — the United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda and the Netherlands — for their continued support for the organs of the Tribunal.

As this is the third annual report of the Tribunal to the General Assembly, it would seem useful to give a brief historical overview. By its resolution 955 (1994) of 8 November 1994, the Security Council established the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994. In its resolution 978 (1995) of 27 February 1995, the Council urged States to arrest and detain persons found within their territory against whom there was sufficient evidence that they were responsible for acts of violence within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal.

Those two resolutions, adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, are in themselves a reminder of the importance of the mandate that the international community has given the Tribunal. It is not simply a question of putting an end to impunity and ensuring that justice triumphs in respect of events of enormous gravity; it is a question also of preventing any recurrence of such events by ensuring, in a manner visible to all, justice that is rigorous and that strictly respects internationally recognized principles of criminal law. For justice to be done in this manner, the Tribunal must be able to function effectively. It is important also to stress the Tribunal's role in the process of national reconciliation.

The European Union is encouraged that a number of measures are under way to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Tribunal's operation, pursuant to the first report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat. We want to recall the importance that we attach to the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. Nonetheless, we are disturbed by problems in the area of administration that were mentioned in the second report of the Tribunal and that still persist. But thanks to the vigorous efforts of the Secretary-General and the office of the President of the Tribunal, the Tribunal now seems to be in a position better to discharge the duties defined in its mandate.

The report lists a number of the measures that have been taken, of which I will touch on just a few. The Tribunal's Registry, which is responsible for managing all matters relating to human resources, was able in 1997 to hire 210 new staff members and renew the contracts of 189 others. Further recruitment is envisaged for the current year within the context of the budget authorized by the General Assembly, which, compared to the previous year's budget, provides for a significant and much needed increase in the number of posts.

With respect to the recruitment policy, where we believe some problems still exist, we would stress the importance of finding highly qualified personnel and of ensuring that the additional means made available to the Tribunal are used primarily to improve the conditions for the judicial work of the judges and prosecutors.

We also take note of the decision taken by the Security Council on 30 April 1998 to create a third Trial Chamber. Let me recall that the General Assembly will soon be electing the judges of the three Trial Chambers.

I am pleased to note that the Tribunal continues to receive voluntary contributions in cash and kind, including audio-visual materials, *inter alia*, from member States of the European Union. Moreover, some members of our Union have seconded staff to the Tribunal until 28 February 1999, the date on which the Secretary-General, pursuant to the relevant General Assembly resolutions, will be obliged to terminate the services of that category of staff. The Tribunal's library, an essential working tool, has been considerably expanded, and working conditions for library users improved. This is due in part at least to donations by several Governments, non-governmental organizations and national associations.

The judicial activities of the Tribunal, described in detail in the report, show that the Tribunal is now operating, in its own words, "at cruising speed". The European Union would like to stress once again that in order to carry out its work in an impartial manner, the Tribunal must continue to work totally independently from any and all political authorities. For that reason, the European Union, which continues to provide significant legal and logistical cooperation to the Tribunal, will refrain from commenting on the cases being considered in that forum. However, we would note that the first judgement ever handed down by an international court on the crime of genocide was that rendered by the Tribunal less than two months ago. Moreover, this year the Tribunal recorded the first guilty plea by an accused.

These events led the Secretary-General to state:

> "The success achieved by this Court in suppressing genocide is of historic scope and demonstrates the United Nations capacity to create institutions which respond to the highest aspirations of the human race."

Indeed, it is thanks to the Tribunal that 50 years after its adoption in the wake of the Holocaust, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide has now become a concrete manifestation of the resolve of the international community to combat genocide as never before.

Because of some difficulties still persisting in the area of judicial assistance, the European Union would stress once again the need for all parties and all States fully to cooperate with the Tribunal so that it can effectively discharge its mandate. From this standpoint and without prejudging the merits of the cases, the European Union would note that a number of persons, including some who had occupied positions of authority in 1994, have been arrested in third countries following the issuance of arrest warrants by the Tribunal. The European Union sincerely hopes that these developments will continue and that the necessary administrative measures will be taken by the States concerned to enable the witnesses summoned by the Tribunal to travel there in order to appear before it. We trust also that the Tribunal will be able to speed up its judicial work, particularly in the case of long-time detainees.

In conclusion, the European Union would note that while there has been substantial progress, much remains to be done. Arrests have been made, but the people for whom arrest warrants have been issued are still at large; they must be detained. Moreover, the Tribunal must continue to provide information about its work in order to heighten public awareness — primarily in Rwanda but also in Member States as a whole, including the donor countries — of the importance of the mandate entrusted to the Tribunal, which is a reflection of the international community's condemnation of genocide and other grave violations of international humanitarian law.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda set an important precedent with respect to the establishment of the International Criminal Court, whose Statute was adopted in Rome in July 1998, thereby opening up a new chapter in the process of bringing to justice the perpetrators of international crimes. The practical experience of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda will be a valuable resource in elaborating norms for the prosecution and punishment, at the international level, of grave violations of humanitarian law, regardless of where they are committed or by whom.

Awareness has also been heightened of the importance of giving victims access to the Tribunal and protecting them. The European Union would reiterate that the international community must continue fully to cooperate with the Tribunal and provide it the necessary resources to discharge its mandate fully. We would urge the Tribunal to continue tirelessly its efforts to bring to justice those who have participated in the commission of horrible crimes so that justice is not denied the victims and in order for a process of true national reconciliation to begin in Rwanda.

Mr. Díaz (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): There cannot be peace without justice; there cannot be reconciliation until the truth comes to light; and a free and democratic society cannot be built as long as criminals who have perpetrated the most hideous

atrocities remain unpunished. Impunity poses a threat to peace because it incites the victims to vengeance and increases the arrogance of the perpetrators. In this context, my delegation believes that the existence of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda is a prerequisite for the much needed reconciliation in the Great Lakes region.

We are deeply gratified that the difficulties that had arisen with respect to the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda are being resolved. The Tribunal finally is trying cases on a continual basis. Its rulings, as well as its 150-plus decisions, represent significant steps in the development of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Its jurisprudence has become authoritative in the interpretation of international common law and an impetus to the continued elaboration of that law in areas in which gaps or imprecisions still exist. We would note also that its very existence helped promote the adoption of the Rome Statute for the establishment of the International Criminal Court.

My delegation is concerned at the continuing difficulties with respect to the elaboration of a judicial timetable to ensure the early trial of all the defendants. The International Tribunal and the international community that established it must respect the defendants' fundamental right to a speedy trial. It was for this reason that my delegation, in its capacity as a Security Council member, supported the establishment of a third Trial Chamber, so that all the detained or indicted who are in the hands of the Tribunal can be judged promptly. We hope that the election of these judges in the near future and their assuming their functions will accelerate the judicial activities of the Tribunal.

Along these same lines we are gratified by the Tribunal's efforts to improve its effectiveness — including the rule modifications adopted in July of this year — in order to eliminate the causes of these unjustified delays. We believe that the Tribunal must continue these efforts in order to bring about additional improvements as regards procedural matters and its working methods as well as coordination with the Office of the Prosecutor.

We are pleased by the improvements in the logistic and administrative support for the Tribunal. We believe that this organ cannot be truly effective if it cannot rely on the necessary financial and human resources. This is an area in which we must all make greater efforts. The financial authorities of the United Nations and our own delegations will have to make greater efforts to secure for this Tribunal all the necessary resources.

My delegation cannot fail to avail itself of this opportunity to mention our concern about the situation of detainees and indictees held in Rwanda. We consider that Rwanda itself must bring to trial all the alleged perpetrators of criminal acts committed in 1994 who are not being prosecuted by the International Tribunal. The existence of this Tribunal does not absolve the Government of Rwanda from its primary obligation to administer justice and penalize the guilty. Nevertheless, we are seriously concerned by the tremendous number of detainees in the prisons of that country and the terrible conditions in which they are being held. We believe that greater efforts must be made to ensure that these prisoners are treated with dignity, as well as to strictly respect their legal rights to be brought to trial.

Similarly, we are concerned about the execution by the Rwandan authorities of several people convicted of committing acts of genocide and other violations of international humanitarian law. Costa Rica is opposed, in all circumstances, to capital punishment. The administration of justice must not violate the fundamental right to life of every human being. Therefore we urge these authorities to impose sentences consonant with the highest standards of respect for human rights.

Finally, allow me to place on record our full support for the work of the Tribunal and our recognition of the efforts of its President, Laity Kama, and its members. Let me also thank the Secretary-General for preparing this third annual report.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 50?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 24 (*continued*)

Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, including measures and recommendations agreed upon at its mid-term review

Report of the Secretary-General (A/53/390 and Add.1)

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): I would like to associate my delegation with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We support that statement whole-heartedly.

It is a privilege and great honour for me to address this Assembly on the important item on our agenda today, on the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. For more than a decade now, the development of Africa has preoccupied this Assembly, since the 1986 adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD) at its thirteenth special session to the 1991 inauguration of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) — the subject of our debate today. While such efforts have been expanded to address Africa's developmental problems, the circumstances that led to the adoption of UNPAAERD and its successor, UN-NADAF, including the need for additional resource mobilization, are as valid today as they were when the two programmes were established.

Despite the enormous problems Africa continues to face today, the continent has the potential for growth and development. The statistics of the last three years have amply demonstrated such growth. That is why the region has embarked on an ambitious reform process aimed at harnessing that potential, taking cognizance of the fact that its development is, in the final analysis, the responsibility of Africans themselves. In this regard, Africa has taken the challenge and committed itself to implementing fully all policies and programmes aimed at creating an enabling environment for growth and development. In so doing, African countries have managed to halt the deteriorating economic trend and, in many cases, have even registered modest growth. What is now required is a supportive international environment in terms of increased financial resources and other mechanisms that will sustain that growth.

Africa needs to develop. And indeed it has to develop, for the good of humankind and the world. That is why it has embarked on the current process of reform and restructuring. However, in order to sustain this process, Africa needs increased resource flows. This is the only way that Africa can progress, and African progress is beneficial not only to African people but also to the world at large. Given the interdependent nature of the global economy today, progress in Africa will thus benefit all, including those who have come to its assistance. This is a fact, and it is being recognized in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

The development efforts being made by African countries will be meaningful only if the international community builds a spirit of new partnership with Africa, comprehensively addressing its problems and searching for lasting solutions. It is at this juncture that we welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of peace and sustainable development in Africa. It is hoped that the report will provide additional impetus for the operationalization of UN-NADAF.

Africa is a continent of 53 States, and of the 48 least developed countries in the world, 33 are in Africa. This makes Africa the most backward continent in terms of development. Not surprisingly, therefore, Africa has dominated and continues to dominate the Security Council's agenda pertaining to peace and security matters.

The development of Africa is also greatly hampered by the unprecedented level of its external debt, which keeps growing each year. Statistics indicate that Africa's external indebtedness increased from $300 billion in 1992 to $332 billion in 1995, and it was $323 billion in 1996. With such an unsustainable level of external debt, it is difficult to have any meaningful capital transformation, which is a prerequisite for development. Africa therefore looks forward to the creation of a meaningful mechanism aimed at effectively addressing the debt problem.

Admittedly, the result of well-intended programmes, such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative of the Bretton Woods institutions, has proven disappointing because of the conditionalities and the sluggish pace of implementation. While Africa does not desire to dishonour its debt obligations, a cancellation of such a debt burden would release and make available

to Africa the critical resources it needs to build appropriate infrastructures for its development.

In the area of trade, many African countries still depend on commodity trade as the major source of export earnings. However, their share of the global market has remained low and accounts for only two per cent of world trade. It is sad to note, as the 1997 report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) suggests, that the 33 least developed countries of Africa, who have about 10 per cent of the world's population, export only 0.37 per cent of global exports and only 1.4 per cent of the developing countries' exports. Worse still, the impact on African countries of the implementation of the Uruguay Round is still ambiguous, particularly in the areas related to market access and agriculture and in the erosion of preferential treatment for Africa's commodity exports. As Africa moves to implement the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules on commodities, it is necessary, however, to grant a moratorium and therefore safeguard the preferential treatment African countries had enjoyed previously under the Lomé Convention. This would enable Africa to adjust to economic diversification, which is deemed necessary if it is to build its competitiveness on the world market.

It is eight years now since the implementation of UN-NADAF began, but Africa has very little to show from the programme's existence. The declining importance of primary commodities in world trade, coupled with loss of market share in world commodities, puts Africa in a comparatively weak position to benefit from globalization. The situation is aggravated further by declining resources, particularly the official development assistance that is essential in development of both human capital and physical infrastructure. To make matters worse, rules on technology transfer deprive African countries of the opportunity to adopt more modern technologies for their development; in the end, even their efforts towards industrialization are thwarted.

Consequently, it is obvious that globalization has not assisted African countries to increase their exports, let alone improve their incomes. The net result is accumulated debts, which are sustaining consumption rather than developmental needs. The debt issue, therefore, needs to be seriously addressed.

African countries have taken painful measures to restructure and to reform government laws and procedures in the hope that foreign direct investments would be forthcoming. However, such hopes have remained illusory as foreign direct investment flows have continued to bypass Africa. Indeed, this trend has invalidated, at least for Africa, the claim that increased foreign direct investment has compensated for official development assistance shortfalls. Although foreign direct investment flows to developing countries have been increasing, the opposite has been the case with Africa, where even the little that has been directed to the continent has been decreasing over the years.

For example, in 1995, the total net resource flows to developing countries was $243.1 billion, while Africa's share was only $28.1 billion. As for 1996, the total net resource flows to developing countries was $281.6 billion, out of which only $22.2 billion went to Africa. These statistics demonstrate clearly that Africa needs a new development strategy if the continent is to pull out of misery and underdevelopment.

By and large, Africa lacks the resources needed to undertake all the necessary restructuring and to build an infrastructure which can attract and support sustained flows of foreign direct investments. Even in rare cases where such infrastructure has been instituted, foreign direct investments have not been forthcoming, at least at the rate and levels which can impact positively and enable Africa to make an economic turnaround. This is partly due to the hesitancy of investors to venture into new and untested markets, notwithstanding the statistical fact that the level of returns on investments in Africa is one of the highest. That hesitancy could be a result of deep-seated prejudices engendered by the propaganda that Africa is a continent in which instability and conflict are endemic. In some cases, conflicts have plagued individual African countries, but these are very few.

We therefore remain convinced that UN-NADAF deserves the support of all. In this regard, we believe that Africa's development partners will continue supporting UN-NADAF and, in so doing, will be assisting African countries to mobilize the resources needed to set up investment-sustaining infrastructure and also will be developing an awareness that will help eliminate negative images which block increased foreign direct investment flows to Africa.

I wish to conclude by stating that Africa has had many initiatives over the past decade, but to no avail. Is it not about time that we asked ourselves what went wrong? Both Africa and the international community have to provide answers to this question. It is not enough to show empathy with the continent, although it is much

needed, but concrete programmes and action are what Africa urgently needs.

Mr. Wilmot (Ghana): The state of implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), particularly following its mid-term review, signals a far from satisfactory level of commitment on the part of the international community to Africa's development.

In our view, General Assembly resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991 and subsequent resolutions on the implementation of UN-NADAF constitute a collective compact between Africa and the international community. That compact identifies the respective responsibilities of African countries and those of the international community in addressing the development challenges in Africa in the context of our common interests.

As made clear by the progress report presented by the Secretary-General (A/53/390) in response to resolution 51/132 of 6 December 1996, and by recent worldwide surveys on economic and human development, the compact is currently like a three-legged table, a table with one leg missing — an unstable construct.

Paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Secretary-General's report paint a broad picture of the seriousness with which African countries have pursued their task of achieving sustainable development and integration into the world economy. The weaknesses identified by the report show that, where it is in their power, African countries have not shirked from any sacrifice or any commitment to shoulder their responsibilities.

In the face of limited budgetary resources arising from the need for prudence in government borrowing and the higher expenditure demands created by measures to strengthen capacity and by new institutions established under constitutional rule, the potential of unaided domestic action has been distorted or severely compromised. These limitations have highlighted the important role of foreign direct investments, official development assistance, trade and debt sustainability in providing or creating complementary resources as the catalysts to growth or to generate momentum in the economies of African countries.

To that end, many African countries, including my own, have enacted legislation, created some of the most attractive environments for investments and courted investors, local and foreign. Private capital flows to Africa, however, continue to account for a very small percentage of total flows to developing countries, with the continent receiving only 2.7 per cent of such flows in 1996. Even so, these flows are concentrated in a few countries and in a few sectors — mainly energy and mining — bypassing agriculture and manufacturing, where the potential for production linkages and value addition are greatest.

As regards official development assistance, the Secretary-General rightly recalls in paragraphs 94 to 97 of his report A/53/390 that, to achieve the objectives of UN-NADAF, it was estimated that a minimum amount of $30 billion in net official development assistance would be needed in 1992, after which it would have to increase at an average annual rate of 4 per cent to achieve a growth rate of at least 6 per cent per annum. This rate has since been revised upwards to 8 per cent to 10 per cent, to be able significantly to reduce poverty in the continent, which means an even higher volume of official development assistance resources than originally estimated. And yet, total official development assistance flows to Africa have been declining steadily, from $25 billion in 1992 to $20.7 billion in 1996, according to the Secretary-General's report A/53/390/Add.1.

It is difficult to understand why official development assistance levels should be declining to historical lows when some of the donor countries are enjoying surpluses. It is tempting to conclude that lack of political will is at the bottom of the issue, not lack of resources or competition for resources. Improvements in African export production have also failed to lift the continent's share of world trade above 2 per cent, due primarily to problems with market access. Africa is expected to be a loser from the results of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations — which, ironically, was geared to the expansion of trade — because of the continent's weak institutional frameworks for implementation of the Round results, price uncertainties and higher interest rates affecting export financing.

Africa's debt burden also remains a critical factor. According to the Secretary-General's report A/52/871 to the Security Council on Africa, to service that debt fully, Africa is projected to spend this year as much as $33 billion, equivalent to 25 per cent of the continent's total export earnings.

The four areas I have outlined constitute the cross-cutting issues impeding the overall socio-economic progress of Africa. By failing to address these vital matters realistically, Africa's development partners must

take some responsibility for the conditions which continue to affect the implementation of UN-NADAF.

We are happy to note, however, the commendable role being played by the organizations of the United Nations family and autonomous bodies brought into relationship with the United Nations to assist African countries in implementing programmes and projects to strengthen their socio-economic capacity. We note particularly, with satisfaction, the revision by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) this year of programme 6 of the United Nations medium-term plan, 1998-2001, entitled "Africa: New Agenda for Development", in relation to the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of UN-NADAF.

We believe that that linkage and the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa provide the basis for a concerted approach by the international community to Africa's development. It also provides an integrated framework for the review of UN-NADAF in the year 2002. The Agenda for Action, adopted at the just-ended second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II), solidifies this process of integration of the framework for action by all partners in Africa's development.

In this connection, we call for an intensification of the efforts being made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), among others, in Africa, in the framework of the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa, to ensure harmonization and effectiveness. We believe that the focus of their activities should increasingly aim at creating synergies for regional integration. We also call on Africa's development partners of the developed world to use the framework of these commitments, to which they are parties, to build consensus in their respective domestic arena for Africa's development.

We believe that the assistance which the development partners need to deploy to Africa's cause is very meagre compared to their endowment, the spillover from a buoyant Africa and the moral imperative of saving millions from poverty, conflict and preventable death. In this connection we propose a dialogue, within the framework of UN-NADAF, to address enhanced capital flows to Africa through, *inter alia*, innovative uses of the guarantee systems of Ex-Imbanks and so on; special funds for investment; and the expansion of the capital base of the International Finance Corporation.

In his statement to the high-level meeting on renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership on 17 September 1998, Ghana's Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry called for special programmes to build up Africa's international trade and for unhindered market access for Africa. I wish to reiterate the call and add that fairness and justice require that, in the implementation of the built-in agenda of the Uruguay Round agreements, issues in the interest of developing countries, particularly those in Africa, should not be relegated to the distant future.

The way we resolve Africa's debt burden, especially official debt, will show how serious we are in our commitment to the implementation of the UN-NADAF. The easiest way to free Africa's human and economic potential is to convert all of its official debt to grants. Far from sending the wrong signals to the markets, such an action would confirm the reality of Africa's irreversible commitment to prudent economic management and good governance.

Before concluding, we wish to draw particular attention to the critical issues outlined in section III of the Secretary-General's report, A/53/390, concerning the negative impact of globalization of the world economy on the continent of Africa, the need for enhanced coordination and feedback between the global political process and the operational levels in the field, mobilization of financial resources, the appropriateness of an independent evaluation of the implementation of the New Agenda and the need for harmonization of current international and bilateral initiatives on Africa.

Africa has made its choice to move forward to peace and prosperity. It is up to the rest of the world to decide whether that process will be sustainable and whether its enormous potential for the peace and prosperity of the world itself will be grasped and nurtured.

Mr. Koosaletse (Botswana): My delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's progress report on the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). The report contains a very detailed analysis of constraints that continue to impede the economic development of Africa. We fully share the view that there is a need to further intensify efforts to accelerate the implementation process.

While some progress has been made since the launching in 1996 of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, designed to operationalize the UN-NADAF, it is disturbing that many of the critical social and economic problems that led to the adoption of that framework still persist today. The performance of sub-Saharan African economies has improved only marginally, and their integration into the international trading system is still a long way from being realized, in spite of the laudable efforts being exerted by Governments towards institutional reform measures, the liberalization of trade and financial regimes and their embracing, by and large, of market-driven economic strategies.

The mid-term review of the UN-NADAF affords us an opportunity, within that framework, to initiate dialogue on how African economies can best be assisted to respond to the expected ripple effects of the Asian financial crisis. Obviously, commodities destined for the Asian market will be adversely affected, resulting in reduced foreign exchange earnings. The impact of loss of income on societies already on the margins of survival threatens to erode the progress achieved so far. Africa cannot afford such an economic reversal.

It is noteworthy that this review of the UN-NADAF coincides with consideration of the Secretary-General's report of April 1998 on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. Botswana supports the incorporation of some of the recommendations put forward in that report into the existing UN-NADAF framework. We believe the challenge of addressing the links between peace and development is a vital part of the debate on these initiatives on Africa.

While the numerous initiatives on Africa are appreciated, not least because they are an indication that the international community is concerned about the problems of Africa, Botswana considers it important that the various activities should be harmonized through the collaboration of all partners in order to avoid unnecessary duplication, to ensure the efficient use of resources and to maximize the impact of the programmes and projects carried out under those initiatives in the recipient countries. In this regard, it is worth noting that there has been an improvement in the operational activities of the United Nations system which has made it better equipped to discharge its responsibilities. Coherence of United Nations activities in Botswana is seen in terms of bringing about less duplication of effort and, hopefully, savings that could benefit other development activities as prioritized in our National Development Plan. Otherwise, Botswana continues to benefit from the good partnership it has with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its sister agencies.

It is important in any review exercise to have a clear idea of performance indicators that serve as a guideline to effective evaluation. In this regard, we urge Member States to cooperate with the United Nations in providing accurate information and other data necessary for such an undertaking.

The issue of lack of funding for the UN-NADAF has once again been succinctly outlined in the Secretary-General's report, and my delegation is deeply concerned about the failure of the international community to support this important initiative. We are convinced that funding for this initiative can be easily raised only if the international community can muster the political will to do so. We appeal to the international community to redouble its efforts in support of the UN-NADAF.

Botswana shares the view that trade expansion through the broadening of the export base is critical to any debate on sustainable development in Africa. In this connection, Botswana joins those States which call for a multilateral trading system which can redress the anomalies in the current trading system. It is also necessary that Africa be assisted in strengthening both its trade and financial infrastructures in readiness for its full integration into the global economy. To this end, regional economic cooperation plays a very important role in the facilitation of exports, particularly from small- and medium-scale industries. The support it offers to small internal markets such as our own is also very critical. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) thus deserves the support of the international community in the implementation of its regional programme.

The Botswana Government has embraced the private sector and civil society as partners in the development process. The three are stakeholders in the economy and possess a remarkable potential in the war against

unemployment and poverty. The intention is to strengthen these partnerships in the years to come.

My delegation is confident that the goals set out in UN-NADAF are achievable. Africa should continue to spare no efforts to accomplish them. While the contribution of the international community is critical to the implementation of UN-NADAF, the onus rests on Africa to do the rest.

It is our hope that great strides will have been made in the implementation of UN-NADAF by both Africa and the international community by the next reporting period.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Norway fully concurs with the views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/52/871). Africa's challenges have to be addressed in a comprehensive manner. Peace, stability and development are indeed closely interlinked.

Last week the Trade and Development Board of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) considered its contribution to the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). UNCTAD recognized that the economic recovery which began in Africa in 1994 has proved to be fragile. It is evident that most African nations are not in a position to take sufficient advantage of the globalization process. They are still lagging behind the 6 per cent growth rate set by UN-NADAF.

There are a number of reasons for the constraints encountered by African countries in the global economy, such as lower commodity prices, lack of diversification, insufficient access to markets in developed countries, the unsustainable debt burden and declining official development assistance. This situation may be further aggravated by the more recent slowdown in the world economy.

Norway has on a number of occasions stated that national Governments have a prime responsibility for the development of their countries through sound macroeconomic policies, respect for human rights, good governance, openness and transparency. We note that African countries have implemented reform programmes and encourage them to pursue this path. At the same time, it is also imperative that sound domestic policies be supported by a friendly, inclusive international economic environment.

Norway has recently taken steps to contribute to such an economic environment for the developing countries in general and African countries in particular.

One of the main obstacles to economic and social development in Africa is the debt burden. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative represents the most far-reaching scheme for debt cancellation to date. However, we are sensitive to the demands for more flexibility in the eligibility criteria and for having the implementation of the HIPC mechanism speeded up. We intend to contribute to the strengthening of the HIPC through the recently launched Norwegian debt relief strategy, which would benefit a substantial number of African countries.

The Norwegian strategy to promote the private sector in developing countries has as a prime aim the stimulation of private investments, which are essential for the development of a dynamic business sector in African economies.

Within the World Trade Organization (WTO), Norway will continue to attach high priority to the concerns of the poorest countries. We are actively supporting the follow-up of the recommendations of last year's WTO high-level meeting for least developed countries and the UNCTAD/International Trade Centre/WTO joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme for Selected Least Developed and other African Countries.

Norway has on a number of occasions called for reversing the present decline in official development assistance from North to South. The Norwegian Government is currently working on a plan to increase Norwegian development assistance in the years ahead. Special emphasis will be placed on increased cooperation with our African partners. Sectors of particular interest are poverty alleviation, improved delivery of social services and debt reduction.

The follow-up to the report by the Secretary-General must inspire us to more vigorous efforts for the development of Africa. We must utilize and further improve the existing multilateral mechanisms in this endeavour. It is essential that all United Nations institutions coordinate and support each other in this task.

In this context, we look forward to the next review of UN-NADAF.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): The Secretary-General's report on the progress made in the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) constitutes a comprehensive summary of undertakings and a useful set of further recommendations for the strengthening of international commitments and shared responsibility towards Africa.

The report combines correct doses of optimism and realism by pointing out some concrete positive developments and at the same time assessing frustrated efforts and some structural challenges that the African continent still faces.

It is important to ensure that the progress made in the economic and social fields in Africa in the last few years is consolidated and deepened. Such progress includes macroeconomic policy reforms, lower fiscal deficits, qualitative improvement of budgetary allocations, increased foreign capital flows, higher growth rates and per capita income rise. These achievements must be safeguarded against the negative impact of the current systemic financial crisis.

The United Nations plays a crucial role in mobilizing and coordinating support and in promoting concrete actions in favour of African countries. In order to make a difference in areas such as trade, finance, technical cooperation, capacity-building and social development, the United Nations system must continue to implement specific assistance initiatives, in cooperation with relevant regional organizations and with the Bretton Woods institutions.

The success of UN-NADAF, however, will rely ultimately on the political will of Governments, in particular of multilateral and bilateral donor countries, to strengthen their cooperation with Africa. In this context, urgent solutions must be found to tackle the continued decline of official development assistance flows in recent years.

South-South cooperation is also an important tool which can be further promoted. Middle-income countries such as Brazil have been playing a relevant role in favour of Africa. Brazil has been deploying significant efforts, through the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and other national institutions, to share with African nations its own experience in the struggle for development.

At present, more than 21 per cent of Brazilian bilateral projects for technical cooperation among developing countries are channelled to cooperation with African countries. Brazil has been cooperating with African countries in a number of strategic areas, such as capacity-building, health, education, management of agricultural policies, tropical agriculture, electric power generation, monitoring and exploration of mineral resources. Some of these activities are under way through bilateral and triangular programmes or are under consideration within multilateral initiatives, such as the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries.

The report of the Secretary-General on Africa was previously the subject of another item on the agenda, and we have already presented our comments on it. We concur with the integration of development concerns in Africa into a broader perspective that lays the foundation for durable peace, economic growth and sustainable development.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): I am speaking towards the end of this debate as the current Chairman of the African Group to thank all delegations for their supportive statements on this agenda item. In that capacity too, I wish to recall that at the commencement of this decade — in 1991 to be precise — the desire of the international community to halt and reverse the process of economic recession in many African countries led to the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). Bearing in mind the failure of an earlier programme — the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 — the New Agenda reflected a strong determination on the part of African countries and on the part of their development partners that economic growth and development should be meaningfully promoted in order to alleviate poverty in our continent.

However, the economic situation in many countries in the continent remains highly intolerable and very unsatisfactory. The lacklustre performance of the economies of many African countries was well underscored in the mid-term review of implementation of UN-NADAF in 1996, which among other things reminded the international community that it must more faithfully fulfil its commitment to the Agenda.

Notwithstanding the call, in resolution 51/32 on the mid-term review of the implementation of UN-NADAF, for increased commitment by the international

community, the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of UN-NADAF, contained in document A/53/390, continues to show weak support by development partners for the development efforts of African countries. As we count down to the next millennium in a world economy characterized by the apparently irreversible phenomenon of globalization, there is an urgent need to find lasting solutions to the critical economic problems of Africa. The case for this remains very strong while the Governments of African countries continue to provide and consolidate the necessary enabling environment for development. Between now and 2002, when the next and final review of UN-NADAF will be due, the international community should definitely show greater political commitment to the implementation of measures in areas that are critical for the attainment of sustainable economic growth and development in African countries.

The African continent is currently one of the regions in the world where returns on foreign investment are highest, according to a recent study by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Ironically, however, it is the region receiving the least foreign direct investment. African countries have undertaken measures to improve laws and regulations governing foreign direct investment. Foreign direct investment is needed in all sectors of African countries engaged in reform. The more the increase in foreign direct investment, the better the chances of consolidating economic reforms, creating more job opportunities and reducing the level of poverty.

We believe that sustainable development is not compatible with debt peonage or a heavy debt burden. Over the years, the burden of debt servicing has diverted substantial financial resources away from development in many African countries. The various debt strategies put in place so far by the international community, including the recent Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative, have proved to be of limited value in addressing the disturbing and unacceptable external debt problems of African countries. We believe that solutions can be found when there is appropriate and strong political will. African countries have started to take adequate internal measures to address the problems of external debt management. We therefore urge creditor countries to convert into grants all the remaining official debts of the poorest African countries. The international community should also, without further delay, put in place an international agreement to clear the entire debt stock of the poorest countries in our continent. The development efforts of African countries will continue to be frustrated so long as those countries remain in the straitjacket of external indebtedness.

In addition to the debt overhang of most African countries, the flow of development assistance has in recent years virtually dried up, at a time it is most needed to strengthen the process of economic reform. Foreign aid has declined in volume and in value when it is particularly required to complement national efforts towards the development of the social and infrastructure sectors of the economy. We commend the efforts of those countries that have reached or surpassed the internationally agreed target for aid flow to developing countries. African countries are currently consolidating their capacities for the mobilization of internal resources for development. In the interim, a predictable increase in the flow of financial assistance is urgently needed to make it possible to implement measures in priority areas of development. The prospects for more efficient utilization of foreign aid are very high in the emerging environment of good governance and accountability in many countries in our continent.

May I at this point reiterate firmly that the lack of market access for the export of our products constitutes one of the major current impediments to the promotion of sustainable economic growth and development in Africa. Regrettably, Africa's share of the global market has remained at about 2 per cent of world trade. The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations notwithstanding, the many agricultural products from African countries, including textiles, continue to encounter various forms of barrier in the markets of developed countries. As a matter of urgency, these barriers should be speedily dismantled by the developed countries and access should be granted to products from African countries. Additionally, the international community should in a more meaningful way assist African countries to diversify their exports in order to augment and stabilize foreign exchange earnings at predictable levels for development. It is our conviction that foreign trade is the most vital engine for sustainable economic growth and development. Therefore, the international community should help African countries to release the energies in this sector for their development.

The pursuit of expanded opportunities for foreign trade is a key element of our collective efforts to promote greater regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration in Africa. Indeed, regional and subregional integration efforts constitute important collective strategies for the acceleration of economic

growth and development in our continent. These efforts and arrangements, including for example the African Economic Community, the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community and so on, broadly aim at the development of the industrial, agricultural and infrastructure sectors of African economies. Varying progress has been made in the integration processes of these communities. However, their effective future consolidation will hinge on more financial and technical support from the international community. The strengthening of regionalism in Africa will facilitate the competitiveness of African countries in the world economy and ease their integration into the process of true globalization.

Allow me to mention that the adoption of several multilateral initiatives for development in Africa is not the whole crux of the matter in terms of the long-term development of the continent. Indeed, the multiplicity of such initiatives may in fact become counter-productive if left unfettered as priorities shift from one initiative to another while the efforts themselves remain uncoordinated. In order to facilitate the process of sustainable development and economic growth in Africa, the international community should harmonize the objectives and strategies of bilateral and multilateral initiatives. Specifically, and perhaps above all, additional and sufficient financial resources should be available to the United Nations system for the implementation of specific programmes under these initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable development in African countries.

In conclusion, the next three years will be very critical for UN-NADAF and for its impact on the promotion of sustainable growth and development in Africa, particularly at a time when the issue of the root causes of African conflicts is being seriously addressed by the General Assembly and by the international community. The global economy is undergoing major transformations, whose benefits tend to accrue to the developed countries and whose disadvantages tend to affect the economically weak developing countries.

The implementation of UN-NADAF by the developed partners regarding external factors critical to development calls for increased and sustained political will. We must accept the reality that the world is now inescapably a global village and that the genuine promotion of development in Africa will therefore be for the mutual benefit of all of us: rich and poor, small and large, developed and developing countries of the world.

Finally, in view of the importance which Africa attaches to UN-NADAF as a vital instrument for assisting in the social and economic development of our continent, a draft resolution will be introduced on the subject and submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration and adoption at a later date.

Mr. Kiwanuka (Uganda): The Uganda delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's progress report on the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). We commend him for that thorough analysis.

African development continues to be a major concern for many African countries and for their development partners. The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s is one of many initiatives on African development by the United Nations. These include the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, whose aim was to serve as the United Nations implementation arm of UN-NADAF.

As we all know, UN-NADAF was a mutual commitment by African countries and their development partners to take specific actions in selected areas to promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development during the 1990s. For African countries, such selected areas included economic reforms, the intensification of the democratic process, regional cooperation and integration and South-South cooperation, human resources development, population and development, agricultural and rural development, environmental protection, investment promotion, and the increased role of civil society, particularly the non-governmental organizations.

On their part, Africa's development partners expressed their commitment to support the efforts of African countries. Specifically, they were called upon to facilitate the solution to Africa's debt problem and increase resource flows by ensuring that net official development assistance, which amounted to $30 billion in 1992, grew by 4 per cent in real terms thereafter, providing market access, supporting economic diversification and encouraging foreign direct investment to Africa.

As we approach the final review of UN-NADAF in 2002, it is appropriate to take stock now and ask the question: what does the balance sheet show?

On the African side and in spite of setbacks which are sometimes quite serious, there have been significant achievements in a number of areas which were of great concern at the beginning of the decade. During the decade many African countries embarked on political and economic reforms, and there is a growing recognition of the role of the private sector. As part of this broad economic reform process, open markets, privatization and the stabilization of currencies have been championed. Economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa has tripled since 1990, and some countries have had growth rates of up to 10 per cent a year.

Allow me at this stage to say something about Uganda's experience under the leadership of President Museveni. During the past 12 years, Uganda's economy has grown at an average rate of 6.5 per cent a year. Inflation has been reduced from 250 per cent in 1986 to single digits today. The gross domestic product has doubled. Industry has grown at an average rate of 15.1 per cent a year, and agriculture too has grown at 6.3 per cent a year. Because of the introduction of universal primary education as a result of President Museveni's commitment in his election manifesto, enrolments in primary schools have doubled since 1996, from 2.9 million children to 5.5 million today.

Political reforms in Africa, especially the strengthening of democracy, have also taken place in spite of the ongoing crises. For our part in Uganda a massive campaign to empower the people is under way. During this period, Ugandans wrote their own Constitution. Power was decentralized from the centre to the local councils, and the frontiers of democracy have been extended and expanded as never before. The climax of this was the decision by Uganda's head of State, President Museveni, to submit himself to the will of the Ugandan electorate. No other leader since independence has ever submitted himself to the electorate of Uganda.

But these achievements do not mean that the problems of Uganda and of Africa have gone away. Poverty still persists, and the agricultural sector is still unmodernized. The result is that Africa is still trapped in the role of a primary commodity exporter.

The huge burden that Africa's external debt has placed on the economies of Africa is unbearable. Africa's total debt as of 1995 was $392 billion. This massive debt overhang has been, and continues to be, a major obstacle to economic growth on the continent as a whole. Although growth rates have improved from 2.7 per cent in 1995 to 4 per cent in 1996, these are still fragile.

There must be resistance to the idea of a permanent category of poor countries in terms of the debt issue. Any proposal made must be viewed as a means to allow African nations to return to solvency and liquidity. In this regard, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative must not be seen by African Governments as the latest panacea for all Africa's problems. A speedy, flexible, case-by-case approach will allow more African countries to qualify for assistance under the HIPC Initiative. This must be seen as a way out of persistent external indebtedness and a return to vigorous growth.

Here allow me to echo the recommendation of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, that there should be an across-the-board conversion into grants of all the official debts of African countries. This may sound like a far-reaching proposal, but it is not new. It has been made at numerous international forums, notably at meetings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and of the Development Committee of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Again in his report to the Security Council in April this year, the Secretary-General not only forcefully proposed the conversion into grants of all remaining official bilateral debt of the poorest African countries, he also urged the Bretton Woods institutions to significantly ease and quicken access to facilities for those heavily indebted poor countries and to provide sufficient resources to enable them to attain a substantial and sustained pace of economic and social development.

The benefit of debt cancellation, for example, is that if African Governments were relieved of the stress of debt overhang, they could better utilize their resources for economic development. There is also a moral argument associated with the concept of a total debt write-off. The so-called jubilee argument has been made by religious leaders recently. The Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops in a recent statement on debt said that their lordships embraced the principle of debt cancellation and called on the World Bank to consider the cancellation of those loans.

In discussing market-access issues, we must stress that Africa's trading opportunities will depend on the extent to which the continent's trading pattern is integrated into the world trading system and its productive capacity. However, it is important to note that Africa's share of world trade continues to decline.

Estimates indicate that the declines in 1996 and 1997 were about 2 per cent and 1.9 per cent respectively. In 1997 the volume of world trade increased by 9.4 per cent, and Africa's trade volume increased by 8 per cent. This increase in export volume was fuelled by an increase in oil production, which was estimated at 66.8 million tons for 1997.

Let me now turn to the need for industrialization. Industrial development is a key element of sustainable economic growth. It helps countries to achieve important social objectives such as jobs, employment and equity. It creates opportunities for the integration of women. Along with agricultural development in rural areas, it can help stem migration and relieve pressure on cities. With industrial development the continent can take decisive steps towards full-throttle competition in the globalized marketplace. But without it, as African leaders declared at the 1997 Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit in Harare, African economies will be condemned to persistent crisis, dependence on humanitarian relief and deepening poverty, despair and political unrest.

In 1997, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization focused on the development of small- and medium-scale industries. Given the prominence of the private sector, it was quite appropriate that the theme for the celebration of Africa Industrialization Day in 1997 was the development of small- and medium-scale industries. Such enterprises are the backbone of economic activity in Africa. They are a major source of livelihoods and income. The majority of them are small- and medium-sized, but they account for a large share of the jobs created in the economy. Many are individual or family-owned operations with a great ability to adjust rapidly to changing market conditions. With trade liberalization and deregulation the role of these small- and medium-sized enterprises has increased tremendously. In both the formal and informal sectors, small entrepreneurs are playing a pivotal role in alleviating poverty and promoting economic progress.

As regards regional cooperation, in recent years a global consensus has emerged on the need for closer regional cooperation and integration so as to overcome the small, unintegrated African markets and so that we are able to face up to the challenges of the 1990s. In addition to the recognition that regional cooperation and integration are absolute necessities for Africa in the coming years, there is a broad consensus today on a number of principles that could guide the new phase of regionalism in Africa. But for regional integration to take place, a number of key factors are essential, including macroeconomic policies, broader civil participation and regional policies to ensure redistribution of benefits.

A number of developments indicate that the "new" regionalism in Africa today may have a better chance of success than previous attempts. It has not only the advantage of being able to draw lessons from past experiences in Africa and elsewhere, but also the benefit of a more favourable international environment. The new regional groupings such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community, the East African Cooperation, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and so forth have benefitted from past experiences.

Uganda recognizes that the success of regional initiatives ultimately hinges on the will of Africa itself. Nevertheless, external support in the form of financial and technical cooperation is being called upon to play an essential role. This includes providing assistance to regional transport and communication networks, as well as to support services, capacity-building and the removal of barriers to trade and factor movements; better monetary cooperation; and, more generally, an international trading environment that is conducive to the integration efforts of African countries.

Let me now turn to conflicts. In his report, "The causes of conflicts and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", the Secretary-General put a finger on a major hindrance to African development. Many African leaders have long shared with the international community alarm at the persistence of deadly conflicts and humanitarian crises. The risk is that Africa gets locked in an endless process of crisis management. This is a real danger because lurching from one crisis to another makes it difficult to focus attention on the long-term structural transformations that are required for sustainable economic and social development. Unfortunately, serious focus by the international community on Africa has diminished. The slowness of the Security Council and the international community to respond to the steady deterioration in the security and humanitarian situation in many parts of Africa is a matter of great concern. Needless to say, we call upon the international community to support and strengthen the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

Finally, let me express my delegation's satisfaction with the Secretary-General's progress report and conclude on a note of promising development which truly

represents the spirit of global partnership with Africa. Early this year, President Clinton visited Africa. The visit was a turning point in United States policy towards Africa. A joint communiqué was issued at the end of the Entebbe Summit for Peace and Prosperity in March 1998 which eight heads of State or Government attended. The fact that eight heads of State or Government signed the communiqué was significant, because they committed themselves to putting partnership into practice and to build those partnerships on principles and shared values. They said,

> "The Heads of State and Government recognize that to effect this new, genuine and transparent partnership, there is a need to commit ourselves to the identification and acknowledgement of both our mutual and divergent interests, the pursuit of free and frank discussions and a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each partner." *(S/1998/307, annex, third paragraph)*

They went on to say,

> "The Heads of State and Government recognize that a lasting partnership must be built on the principles of shared ownership, joint responsibility and full transparency." *(ibid., fourth paragraph)*

Mr. Mabilangan (Philippines): Let me first join other delegations in congratulating the Secretary-General on his excellent reports on agenda item 24 of the present session. My delegation fully associates itself with the statement by the representative of Indonesia, who spoke on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

With the adoption of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), the international community unequivocally committed itself to supporting the development efforts of all countries in Africa. The New Agenda and its subsequent mid-term review are clear on the efforts required to put the countries of the African continent on the road to economic recovery and prosperity.

The African countries themselves have made their best efforts to contribute their part in revitalizing their economy and sustaining the process of their development despite financial and other serious constraints. In this regard, it may be instructive to refer to the progress report of the Secretary-General on this subject, which indicated, among other things, that, since the mid-term review, African countries have deepened the progress that had previously been achieved in several fields.

It is critical, however, that the development process now under way in the African continent must not be curtailed or reversed so that real progress in terms of uplifting the material conditions of the peoples of Africa will continue. It is therefore critical that appropriate action be implemented at the international level to insulate them from the financial crisis raging in some parts of the world.

At the same time, it is important for the international community to see to it that all the required measures identified in UN-NADAF and in its mid-term review are carried out to the fullest.

Among other measures, these require the promotion of the private sector and foreign direct investment in the African countries, the expansion of market access for the export products of African countries, diversification of African economies and commodities, the provision of adequate and predictable sources of external financing and the resolution of the serious external indebtedness of many African countries.

As reported in document A/53/390, since the mid-term review certain African countries have encouraged privatization as an instrument of resource mobilization, while others have created a more enabling environment for attracting foreign direct investment. My delegation certainly encourages them to persist in the efforts aimed at promoting private sector participation in their economies. We also encourage the enhancement of foreign direct investment for the development of Africa. In this regard, the international community, including the financial institutions, must provide the necessary support, involving a wide range of measures, including the improvement of the physical, institutional and social infrastructures in order to attract further foreign and domestic investments.

According to the report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Africa ships only about 0.37 per cent of global exports and about 1.4 per cent of exports from the developing world. It is clear that unless the African countries are accorded the opportunity to expand their earning potential through the exports of their goods and services, there is not much hope for a sustained path to progress in the continent. The UN-NADAF and its mid-term review contain specific references for concrete action that must be implemented to support the exports of the countries in Africa. My delegation therefore calls on the international community, particularly the developed countries, to

implement measures that would expand market access for the products of the African countries.

The effective mobilization of financial resources is extremely necessary for the African continent. Unless sufficient resources are at the disposal of African countries, it will be impossible to sustain the process under way for the revitalization of their economies. It is thus troubling to note the observation in document A/53/390/Add.1 that gross domestic savings have been consistently declining in Africa. It is equally disquieting to note that Africa's share of total resource flows to developing countries not only was reduced from 15.4 per cent in 1992 to 7.4 per cent in 1996, but also has fluctuated from year to year, the main reason for which, of course, was the declining trend of official development assistance.

Closely related to the mobilization of resources is the question of providing a definitive resolution to the enormous external indebtedness of many African countries. Again, unless a durable solution to their external debt and debt-servicing problems is in place, there will be a considerable drain in the resources which could otherwise be channelled to support development efforts. In this regard, I wish to refer to what I indicated in my statement on agenda item 164, "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa": that serious consideration should be accorded to the Organization of African Unity's framework for action on debt, which called for an international agreement to clear the entire debt stock of the poorest countries in Africa within a reasonably short period of time, and in the context of Africa's overall economic reforms.

The Secretary-General himself noted that

> "Significant movement on lifting Africa's crippling debt burden will require concerted political action at the highest levels." *(A/52/871, para. 95)*

The road to economic recovery and the required measures to sustain the path to development in the African continent have been well laid out in UN-NADAF and in its mid-term review. The international community needs only to be conscientious with regard to the commitments embodied in those documents and thereby dutifully make the best efforts to support Africa's development.

I am confident that our solidarity with all the peoples of the continent of Africa will provide the required momentum aimed at the full and effective implementation of the New Agenda.

Mr. Chulkov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Russia attaches great importance to all forms of cooperation that can help to ensure the development of countries and regions. We consider the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), adopted by the General Assembly in 1991, to be a basic document for conjoining national efforts with the activities of the United Nations system with a view to the comprehensive development of the African continent. We support such key goals of UN-NADAF as coordinating efforts at the national, regional and international levels; ensuring that the development of Africa becomes one of the international community's priorities; and helping to establish conditions conducive to development efforts being made in Africa.

The Russian delegation welcomes the growing participation of African States in world affairs and their constructive contribution to strengthening international and regional security. We happily note the positive trends in the sphere of political and economic reform and the establishment of integration mechanisms in Africa.

The General Assembly's recent consideration of the item on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa confirmed that the success of the strategy lies in the settlement of the numerous conflicts in Africa and in ensuring the political stabilization of the region. Helping to settle inter-State and internal conflict situations in the region is a priority of Russian policy in Africa.

UN-NADAF reflects the desire of the African countries and the international community to develop cooperation as a contribution to promoting sustainable development. Our delegation largely agrees with the conclusions of the mid-term review of the programme and believes that, in order to accomplish this task, Governments, local governing bodies, non-governmental organizations and the international community need to unite their efforts.

Responsibility for development and for building effective economic policy lies — quite appropriately, in our view — with countries themselves. At the same time, a very important role in the process is played by international cooperation and the establishment of conditions conducive to development. This is particularly topical in the case of African countries, many of which, with every good intention, are simply unable by themselves, in today's circumstances, to break out of the

vicious circle of socio-economic problems exacerbated by the burdens and consequences of the current global financial and economic crisis.

Given the current realities, one of the foremost tasks of the international community in helping Africa is to make the best choice of priorities. Russia reconfirms its position on the advisability of shifting attention from emergency humanitarian assistance to support for long-term projects that will strengthen and develop the countries' own creative potential. We believe that it is important to continue to seek ways of reducing the debt burden of the African States and to provide conditions in which their products enjoy access to markets.

I would mention, as an example of the Russian contribution to the development of African countries, the work carried out in Africa by our Ministry of Civil Defence, Emergencies and Natural Disasters. In particular, I would point to the successful automotive school project in Rwanda, aimed at promoting national capacities in the delivery of humanitarian supplies in Africa, which is already developing at the regional level.

An important element of the successful development of African economies is strengthening coordination between donor countries and various international institutions to ensure more coordinated work in the implementation of decisions of the United Nations global conferences. Through multilateral and bilateral cooperation in Africa, a whole series of mutually reduplicating programmes are being implemented. In this connection, we feel it very important to avoid any dissipation of effort and would recommend, in implementing this task, enhancing the United Nations coordinating role in providing assistance to Africa. We also advocate the more active involvement of certain agencies, including the World Bank, in implementing the United Nations Special Initiatives on Africa.

Russia welcomes the African development initiatives that bolster UN-NADAF. In particular, we note the results of the recent second Tokyo International Conference on African Development. The final document adopted there, entitled "African Development Towards the 21st Century: The Tokyo Agenda for Action", shows a growing understanding of the fact that finding a solution to the problems of Africa is becoming a priority task for the world community. We support the statement made by the Russian Federation at the Tokyo Conference to the effect that Russia is ready to participate in projects in Africa, including international ones, especially in the humanitarian area and in demining.

The Acting President: I should like to inform members that a draft resolution on this item will be submitted to the Secretariat at a later date.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.